7/21/88 -- Joe Prosser's adult Infocomic idea

Characters:

Husband
Gets more and more paranoid as film progresses.

Wife

Butcher
Intelligent man, handsome (this could drive the husband crazy), will give the viewer the impression that he's the protagonist.

Friend
It becomes more and more apparent that he's a psychopath.

Opening scene:

In rich house. Husband has been drinking. He and wife are arguing. Maybe it gets violent; he slaps her. He threatens to kill her. Cut to credits.

Plot from husband's viewpoint:

He goes into butcher shop [hungover], butcher realizes he's upset, asks what's wrong. Butcher is a trustworthy guy; he confides wife is missing. He shows typewritten note which threatens death of wife if disappearance is revealed to cops. Butcher looks strangely overly-distressed. Why??? [I think the first note should be typed, the rest in her handwriting.]

Husband goes to work; confides in co-worker who's also a friend. Friend is sympathetic, urges husband not to call police at risk of harm to wife.

Some woman has been putting the moves on the husband. He doesn't tell her wife has disappeared, and resists her advances. But they still get kind of cosy. As they leave together (or whatever), friend walks by in background. Jump to friend here, and learn that his suspicions are confirmed -- husband and woman are involved.

Husband arrives home to find wife sitting watching tv. At first he only sees her through the window, from the back, or whatever. Comig closer, he sees there's a knife in her chest! But there's no blood;

it's a mannequin that looks exactly like her!!! There's a typed ransom note clenched between her teeth.

The mannequins continue to arrive [2 or 3 more, perhaps one is found hanging by the neck at the top of some stairs; long shadows slowly swaying down the steps. there's a light behind it, all you see is the silhouette.], each with some violence done to it. [Perhaps the mannequins are made to look dead now. The mannequin looks like its been hung.] He pays half the ransom. After the second dummy, the friend suggests that she's engineering it so she can get money to run off with her lover. Points out rationale for this. Suggests she can't leave without her full share of money; He said "why not? It's cheaper for you than divorce and quicker for her too!" Husband gets really mad at wife for doing this to him.

Friends seems to know more and more about the situation, [husband is really starting to get paranoid now. He starts to feel that he being followed by, of all people, the butcher. more on that later.] even what wife was wearing on evening of disappearance. This is very subtle. Husband: "Her clothes aren't even missing! What would she have worn?" Friend: "Oh, if she running off to her lover, no doubt something sexy like a negligee." [more detail about the negligee would be too obvious.] Husband thinks: "Gasp. Francine has a nightgown like that!" He goes home, checks, finds that one is missing. Husband suspects the friend is the wife's lover, her innocent victim!

He decides to follow the friend. They go to warehouse in seedy part of town. Inside are mannequins, and the wife! He shoots her. The end.

OR

He decides to set trap with rest of ransom money, insist on leaving it in certain place, follow whoever goes to pick it up. The friend picks up the money. The husband follows the friend to the warehouse, etc. as above.

Butcher's viewpoint:

The butcher is a close friend of the wife who has helped him out in some delicate situation. The situation is still not resolved; he can't resolve it without her help, and now she is gone! Perhaps the wife is a social worker who has been helping his daughter recover from a drug addiction, or whatever. He is devastated that the wife is missing.

Butcher believes that husband killed wife and wrote the note himself. [that's why only the first one needs to be typed. I think!] "but", the

butcher asks himself, "why doesn't he just go to the cops since nothing can actually happen to her?" He decides "he really wants to play the whole thing out" [perhaps some 'Rear Window' innocent bystander speculation here. More on that later.]

Butcher starts to follow husband. He also sees him getting cosy with bimbo. This confirms his theory about hubby's motive. Following further, he watches as hubby carries a stiff looking female body [mannequin] to an incinerator and stuffs it in; perhaps breaking off an arm to fit it in! Later there is a scene where hubby and friend are in a bar; butcher is there also, at a different table with his back turned, but within earshot. [put camera at perimeter of bar. Have it slowly pan around until all three are seen.] What he hears makes him speculate even more wildly.

This leads to a new ending. Butcher follows husband to warehouse but doesn't see friend. Shoots husband after husband shoots wife.